

August 18, 2011

South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs

425 East Capitol Avenue

Pierre, SD 57501

Phone: 605-773-3269

Web site: www.mva.sd.gov

POKER RUN A HUGE SUCCESS

Handlebars! Chrome! Bikers! Veterans! Volunteers!

That's all it took to have another successful poker run. This year's Fall River Freedom Ride Poker Run, organized by the South Dakota Legion Riders, can be deemed successful. With over 150 participants, the Legion Riders presented the Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home with a donation of \$1,200. Loyalty to our veterans is not something unique to South Dakota, it crosses the borders. Legion Rider Bill Johnson, from New Hampshire, had the second place winning hand in the poker run and donated all of his prize back to the State Veterans Home. Thanks to all that participated, assisted and organized this wonderful event.



Inside this issue:

Detachment 48 Activated	2
Run for the Fallen	3
Watertown Readiness Center Groundbreaking Ceremony	3
VA to Host Women's Retreat	4
Women of War Center	4
Job Fair	5
Heroes Serving Heroes	5
Patriot Flag	6
Veterans/Military Day at the State Fair	7
Upcoming Events	7

DETACHMENT 48 ACTIVATED

The South Dakota Army National Guard held an activation ceremony this week for the Rapid City-based Detachment 48 Operational Support Airlift (OSA) Command at the Army Aviation Support Facility near Rapid City Regional Airport. The eight-member unit will deploy for a one-year tour to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Det. 48 is fixed-wing aviation unit comprised of pilots and operations specialists, which operate the C-12 King Air. The Soldiers will take on a new mission of providing aerial surveillance in support of ground commanders in the field. "Normally we transport people and DoD personnel," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Kenneth East, Det. 48 commander. "On this deployment we'll conduct aerial surveillance. This is a new mission that the C-12 is taking on that is very unique and different from our regular stateside mission."

Last year, Det. 48 flew more than 400 flight hours and 100 stateside missions. They also transported more than 250 personnel ranging in rank from a four-star general to a private. As a result of their new mission, members of Det. 48 spent time conducting specialized training new to the unit. "We have two Soldiers serving in flight operations roles who will basically be the surveillance eyes and ears for the ground commander," said East. "Those two Soldiers conducted six weeks of training that went very well. In fact, both of them were recommended as flight operation instructors while we're over there."

This is the second mobilization for Det. 48, having deployed to Afghanistan for seven months in 2008. "The fact it has been called back to federal service in this short period of time is a testament to the significant value that it has on the war on terror," said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the South Dakota National Guard.

The unit will also conduct several weeks of pre-mobilization training at Fort Hood, Texas, prior to leaving for Afghanistan.



A sunbeam to warm you,
A moonbeam to charm you,
A sheltering angel, so nothing can harm
you.

(Irish Blessing)



GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY

The South Dakota Army National Guard will hold a ground breaking ceremony for the new Watertown Readiness Center at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 23. The ceremony will be held at 1500 26th Avenue NW, east of Sioux Conifer Road on SD Highway 20.

The Watertown Readiness Center will be a state-of-the-art facility that will enhance training and readiness for National Guard forces for years to come.

Gov. Dennis Daugaard, Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general for the SDNG, U.S. Senator Tim Johnson, U.S. Rep. Kristi Noem, Watertown Mayor Gary Williams, as well as local civic and business leaders are all expected to be in attendance for the event.



RUN FOR THE FALLEN

Beginning Flag Day, June 14, 2008, a dedicated team of runners ran across America from Fort Irwin, CA to Arlington National Cemetery, one mile for every Soldier, Sailor, Airmen, and Marine killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom. For ten weeks, team members marked each mile with an American flag and signcard in an apolitical reflection of remembrance of each service member.



This year, runners in South Dakota will support our heroes by running the weekend of Aug. 20-21, 2011, in the annual "Run for the Fallen".

To learn more, check out their website www.runforthefallen.org.

If there are no scheduled walks/runs in your area, you can do the one mile walk by yourself, wherever you are, in honor of a fallen soldier of your choosing.

VA TO HOST WOMEN'S RETREAT

The specialized Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Outpatient Treatment Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Black Hills Health Care System is hosting a women's retreat October 14-16, 2011, at the Fort Meade VA Medical Center.

The semi-annual weekend retreat, beginning at 12pm on October 14th, is for women veterans of all eras and family members (wives, significant others, mothers, adult daughters, etc) of combat veterans. The major objectives of the retreat are to help participants develop a better understanding of PTSD, develop a support system and provide an opportunity to develop new perspectives in relationships with their higher power, family, friends and the broader world in which they live.

The semi-annual retreat is in its 17th year and is designed to help women look at some of the basic questions in their lives. The volunteer facilitators and participants build a community of women who take the time to support each other. The retreat does not provide all the answers, but will provide the time, place and personal support for participants to search within themselves.

The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) organization graciously provides a yearly charitable grant to cover meals and lodging for eligible participants.

Registration is on a first come, first served basis.

Participants must be screened and pre-register by phoning the PCT Program (Monday-Friday 8am-4pm) at 720-7449 or 1-800-743-1070, extension 7449.

VISION BECOMES REALITY

What started out as a dream, a vision; has come full circle and is now a reality. At 11:00 am on 11-11-11 (November 11, 2011), the community leaders in Belle Fourche will hold the grand opening for the "Women of War" center.

You can read more about this project at: <http://communityvisn.org> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WomenOfWar.cvisn>.

A dream that began with a handful, started enrolling participants on August 15.

At this time, both Western Dakota Tech and Black Hills State University are on line for formal training programs and 26 private contractors have agreed to offer internships or on-the-job-training.

In addition to the women in the residential program, they will be providing training to an additional 100 homeless veterans.



COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS IN SERVICE OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Community-VISN is a non-profit organization that serves to assist people in Butte County and in the neighboring Northern Hills Communities.

JOB FAIR

The Department of Labor and Regulation and several other agencies and organizations, including the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs, hosted a job fair Wednesday, August 18, 2011. Approximately 50 local and regional employers were on hand to assist veterans, guardsmen, reservists and spouses.

Doug Brown, Veterans Benefit Representative for the Department of Veterans Affairs, visited with participants regarding disability compensation, education and healthcare benefits. Doug estimates there were over 130 participants.

Sioux Falls Mayor Mike Huether kicked off the Fair by reading a proclamation commending the veterans for their dedicated service to this country.



HEROES SERVING HEROES

Each and every day, Perry Huffman and Justin Shellhammer go to their jobs at the VA Black Hills Health Care System to protect and serve their heroes, our veterans.

Neither of them expecting to be nominated for or recognized for their heroic efforts.

On Sept 12, 2001, a massive American flag hung from the wreckage at ground zero — until the elements tore it to tatters.

Almost ten years later, that same flag paid a visit to Mount Rushmore National Memorial where a group of local heroes assisted in stitching it back together — adding South Dakota's history.

As the National 9/11 Flag travels across the country, heroes from each state are invited to assist in stitching/repairing the flag. Two of South Dakota's heroes were recognized for their service to this country and to their community.

Officer Justin Shellhammer, (Fort Meade VABHHCS Police Officer) was recognized for being the first amputee to complete the South Dakota Law Enforcement Acadamey. He made his stitch in honor of all his friends that were killed overseas.

Captain Perry Huffman (Hot Springs VABHHCS Police Officer) was recognized for rescuing an autistic teenager who was wandering on I-90.

The goal of the National 9/11 Flag Tour is to display this historic flag, inspiring Americanism and to recognize local heroes in all 50 states.



PATRIOT FLAG TRAVELS SOUTH DAKOTA



Mount Rushmore

August 6, 2011

UNITED WE STAND



The Freedom Field

Buffalo Chip

Sturgis, SD

August 8, 2011

NEVER FORGET



The State Capitol

Pierre, SD

August 14, 2011

KEEPING THE MEMORIES ALIVE



VETERANS/MILITARY DAY AT THE FAIR

This year's theme for the South Dakota State Fair is "Country Pride Statewide."

Thursday, September 1, has been designated as "salute to veterans and military personnel." All veterans and active military personnel will be given free gate admission.

A "Salute to Veterans" program will be held at 11:00 am on the Northwestern Energy Freedom Stage. Major General Timothy Reisch will deliver the keynote address.



UPCOMING EVENTS

August 19—Stand Down at Ft Thompson Community Center—10:00 am

August 23— Watertown Readiness Center Groundbreaking Ceremony

August 29-31— VSO Annual Benefits School—Pierre Ramkota Hotel

September 1—Veterans Day at the SD State Fair—Free Admission for Veterans

September 11—Patriot Day

September 16—Stand Down - Watertown

September 20—Stand Down—Aberdeen

September 21—Stand Down—McLaughlin

September 22—Stand Down—Eagle Butte

September 23—Stand Down—Sioux Falls

October 13—Stand Down—Rapid City

October 14-16—VABHHCS Women's Retreat

November 11— Grand Opening of Women of War Center

Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
South Dakota Department of the Military
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs
Soldiers and Sailors Building
425 E Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501
Phone: 605-773-8242
E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us
Web site: <http://mva.sd.gov>

